

Filed for intro on 05/11/2000

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 726

By Davis (Wash)

A RESOLUTION to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War and to honor the valiant soldiers who served in the Korean War.

WHEREAS, our country was conceived by individuals willing to sacrifice their personal safety and concerns to ensure this nation's freedom, and Tennessee is especially proud to have so many valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, thousands of Tennesseans have continued this time-honored tradition of volunteerism through service in the armed forces, reaffirming this state's great tradition as the Volunteer State; and

WHEREAS, the preservation of peace and freedom for the United States of America and its allies throughout the world depends, as it has for more than two hundred years, on the service, steadfastness, and sacrifice of the men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, at the end of World War II, the peninsula of Korea was divided at the 38th parallel, the Soviet forces accepted the surrender of Japanese forces north of the parallel and established a Communist puppet state known as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea; American forces accepted the surrender of Japanese forces south of the parallel and held free elections which resulted in the establishment of the Republic of Korea; and

WHEREAS, after numerous failed attempts by the United Nations to unite Korea, the United States began withdrawing their armed forces from South Korea in 1949, leaving behind only a 500-man Korean Military Assistance Group to defend the lower half of the peninsula; and

WHEREAS, on June 25, 1950, in a move that has been compared to Hitler's 1936 invasion of the Rhineland, the Soviet armed and trained military of North Korea invaded South Korea and captured the South Korean capital, Seoul, in just a few hours; and

WHEREAS, the next day, the United States introduced and passed a United Nations resolution authorizing the United States to take action; and

WHEREAS, beginning on June 27, 1950, occupation troops from Japan were rushed to South Korea, however, with their obsolete World War II equipment and lack of combat training, the reinforcements were also no match for the North Korean forces; and

WHEREAS, by the end of July 1950, the North Korean Communist forces had forced their way to within 60 miles of the port city, Pusan, but the UN forces held strong and were finally able to launch counter attacks and gain some ground in August; and

WHEREAS, the UN landing at Inchon in September 1950 forced the North Koreans to beat a rapid retreat through South Korea and Seoul was liberated later in the month; and

WHEREAS, UN forces continued forcing North Korean forces to retreat, pushing past the original border of the 38th parallel far into North Korea; and

WHEREAS, in late November 1950, Communist Chinese forces intervened and pressed the UN forces about halfway down through South Korea, overtaking Seoul once again; and

WHEREAS, by the spring of 1951, the communist drive had run out of steam, and UN forces slowly advanced back up through South Korea, liberated Seoul again and stopped their forward progress approximately where the war had begun; and

WHEREAS, peace treaty negotiations to end the war began in 1951; however, the war continued for the next two years, as a stalemated war of attrition, until an armistice was finally signed on July 27, 1953 and an uneasy truce was formed. No peace treaty has ever been signed; and

WHEREAS, the men and women who fought in the Korean War served with courage and gallantry, and deserve proper recognition for their heroism; and

WHEREAS, American casualties for the Korean War totaled more than 50,000, including those soldiers who are missing in action and are presumed dead; the great bravery and ability that was exhibited by those valiant soldiers during the Korean War is unparalleled; and

WHEREAS, the Korean War is unique in its significance, because it was the first true test of the Cold War. With so many European and Asian countries falling under Communist control in the years immediately following World War II, the invasion of South Korea could not have been allowed to happen without intervention from the United States, because of the very real threat of Communist forces invading and taking over other democratic countries; and

WHEREAS, this year, on the 50th anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War, we should humbly bow our heads and remember the valiant members of our armed forces who protected the precepts of democracy in a foreign land so far from their homes to ensure our freedom and the freedom of generations to come; and

WHEREAS, the elected officials of this General Assembly and, indeed, all Tennesseans, should not only remember the many sacrifices of those who served in the Korean War, but should also teach present and future generations about the harsh realities of war and the high price of freedom; and

WHEREAS, it is important that this General Assembly recognize those brave men and women who have provided for the continued safety and security of our great nation and extend our gratitude for the gallantry and courage demonstrated by United States soldiers during the Korean War; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we hereby commemorate the 50th anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War on June 25, 1950 and urge all Tennesseans to participate in appropriate ceremonies commemorating this important era in U.S. history.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we hereby salute the outstanding men and women who served with valor and distinction during the Korean War and offer our thanks for a difficult job well done.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.